

Message Text

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SUBJECT: PRESS PLAY ON SCHLESINGER REPORT

BEGIN SUMMARY: ROK PRESS GAVE MAJOR COVERAGE TO KOREAN ASPECTS OF DEFENSE SECRETARY SCHLESINGER'S ANNUAL REPORT TO CONGRESS AT TIME OF ITS RELEASE AND HAS SINCE FOLLOWED UP WITH LONG EDITORIALS WHICH INTERPRET REPORT AS FAVORABLE, NEW DEVELOPMENT IN US SECURITY POLICY. END SUMMARY.

1. PRESS ARTICLES ON SECRETARY SCHLESINGER'S ANNUAL REPORT ON DEFENSE HAVE EMPHASIZED SECRETARY'S AFFIRMATION THAT US HAS MAJOR SECURITY STAKE IN KOREA, THAT WITHDRAWAL OF US TROOPS WOULD INVITE NORTH KOREAN AGGRESSION, AND THAT CONTINUED US FORCE PRESENCE IN KOREA IS NECESSARY FOR DEFENSE OF NORTHEAST ASIA AS WELL AS ROK.

2. EDITORIALS IN ALL PAPERS EXCEPT DONGA ILBO HAVE INTERPRETED KOREAN PASSAGES OF DEFENSE REPORT AS IMPORTANT STATEMENT WHICH IN CHOSUN ILBO'S WORDS FOR FIRST TIME LINKS: "SECURITY ON THE KOREAN PENINSULA TO THE US'S WORLDWIDE MILITARY STRATEGY..." EXPRESSING VIEW SHARED TO VARYING DEGREE BY OTHER PAPERS, CHOSEUN
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SEES REPORT AS "DRASTIC MODIFICATION" OF GRADUAL WITHDRAWAL POLICY UNDER NIXON DOCTRINE AND RECOGNITION OF IMPORTANCE OF KOREA AS BASE FOR REGIONAL SECURITY. HANKUK ILBO AND OFFICIAL SEOUL SHINMUN ALSO

SEE MAJOR SIGNIFICANCE AND CHANGE IN REPORT'S EMPHASIS
ON KOREA'S POSITION AS MAJOR LINK IN GLOBAL SECURITY
ARRANGEMENT FROM ASIA TO EUROPE AND THEY HEARTILY
WELCOME THIS CHANGE. SEVERAL PAPERS SHARE HOPE US
ADMINISTRATION WILL BE SUCCESSFUL IN CONVINCING CONGRESS
OF ITS VIEWS.

3. WHILE ALSO WELCOMING SECRETARY'S REPORT FOR
CLARIFYING AND REAFFIRMING US SECURITY
POSTURE, LEADING INDEPENDENT DONG ILBO SEES LITTLE
CHANGE IN US VIEWS ON KOREAN SECURITY AS EXPRESSED
IN REPORT. DONGA NOTES THAT US ADMINISTRATION HAS
BEEN CONSISTENT IN OPPOSING TROOP WITHDRAWAL AND THAT
"SCHLESINGER'S VIEWS OF KOREA AS STRONGHOLD OF
AMERICAN TROOPS IN NORTHEAST ASIA IS NO MORE THAN
RECONFIRMATION OF THE CONVENTIONAL US SECURITY
VIEWS. "SOME AMERICANS" CONTINUES DONGA "HAVE CALLED
FOR US TROOP WITHDRAWAL TO ACCELERATE DETENTE.
HOWEVER THE PENTAGON REPORT PROVES THAT IMPROVING
RELATIONS WITH CHINA AND THE USSR HAS NOTHING TO DO
WITH THE US PRESENCE IN ROK." "IN THIS SENSE THE
REPORT IS MEANINGFUL", DONGA CONCLUDES.
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